

WASHINGTON STAR

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Newsmen at BNA Go Out on Strike

Members of the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild today went on strike against the Bureau of National Affairs, a major publisher in the District in the field of taxes, labor relations and other economic affairs.

Spokesmen for both the Guild and BNA indicated the chief stumbling block was union security as picket lines went up at the company's offices at 1231 24th St. NW. and three other buildings in which the firm operates.

The company said nearly 200 employees were affected.

The strike began at 7 a.m. after the latest federal mediation session yesterday failed to bring the negotiators together. Negotiations have been in progress since the old contract expired six months ago.

Plans to Publish

John Stewart, BNA president, said the company would continue to publish. The private corporation publishes some 23 specialized reports and services including U.S. Law Week, Labor Relations Reporter, U.S. Patents Quarterly and International Trade Reporter.

Stewart said the union has balked at signing a contract without some kind of compulsory union membership beyond the maintenance of membership clause which the company has offered. He said the company has had contractual relations with the Guild for 19 years and this is the first strike.

"We're not in the newspaper business, and our chief competitors in the business are not even organized," Stewart said. "Under those circumstances, we feel the company's interests would be seriously prejudiced by having a union shop."

Brian Flores, chief negotiator

for the Guild, said the union essentially has asked for something beyond maintenance of membership, though it has a full union shop proposal on the table.

Unfair Practices Cited

Flores said, however, that although union security is the "hot bargaining factor," it was unfair labor practices that caused the union to take a strike vote.

The local AFL-CIO union last week filed unfair labor practice charges against the company, alleging supervisory intimidation of union members during a recent organizing drive, Flores said. He said an additional charge would be filed today accusing the company of failure to bargain on conditions it says it will put in effect.

A memo to all employees by Stewart said that effective today certain improvements in

salaries and working conditions would be instituted, and also that the company will stop checking off dues for the union.

The memorandum assured protection of employees coming to work.

Supervisor Disavowed

Stewart said that the earlier charge grew out of an incident in which a supervisory employee "flew off the handle" and made derogatory statements about the union in front of employees. But he said a letter to all employees stated that this action was against company policy.

He added that the company offered in negotiations to take any further step the Guild suggested to disavow the action of the supervisor.

Flores said about 100 were picketing the buildings at 1231 and 1220 24th St. NW, 2411 to 2419 M Street NW, and 2430 Pennsylvania Ave. NW.